

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 0600

BONN FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY HARTMAN

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, SP

SUBJECT: SPANISH INTERNAL SITUATION A PERSPECTIVE

1. IN THE WAKE OF INCIDENTS IN THE PAST FEW DAYS INVOLVING THE KILLING OF SIX LEFTISTS) MOSTS OF WHOM IF NOT ALL WERE PCE MEMBERS) AT THE HANDS OF THE EXTREME RIGHT, THE DEATH OF ANOTHER LEFTIST AS A RESULT OF POLICE ACTION, AND THE KIDNAPPING BY THE EXTREME LEFT OF LT. GENERAL VILLAESCUSA THE PRESIDENT OF THE SUPREME MILITARY TRIBUNAL. IN ADDITION TO THE KIDNAPPING OVER A MONTH AGO OF PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL OF STATE ORIOL) I BELIEVE IT MIGHT BE USEFUL TO TRY TO PUT SOME OF THESE EVENTS INTO PERSPECETIVE.

2. THE SPANISH ARE ENGAGED IN THE EXTREMELY DELICATE PROCESS OF TRANSFORMING SPAIN FROM A COUNTRY WHICH FOR FORTY YEARS WAS UNDER FRANCO DICTATORSHIP TO ONE WHICH HAS A DEMOCRATIC FORM OF GOVERNMENT MODELLED ALONG THE GENERAL LINES OF OTHER WESTERN EUROPEAN COUNRIES. HISTORY PROVIDES FEW EXAMPLES OF PEACFUEL TRANSITION FROM DICTATORSHIP
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TO DEMOCRACY. SO FAR, AND IN SPITE OF A NOT EXCESSIVE NUMBER OF VIOLENT INCIDENTS OVER THE PAST FOURTEEN MONTHS, THE PROCESSHAS WORKED EXTRAORDINARLY WELL AND EACH DAY HAS SEEN FURTHER PROGRESSIN THE EVOLUTION TOWARD A DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM. THE POLITICAL REFORM BILL ADOPTED BY THE CORTES LAST NOVEMBER AND THE REFERENDUM ON THE SAME BILL IN DECEMBER WERE IMPORTANT MILESTRONES

IN THE PROCESS. THE EFFORTS OF VARIOUS POLITICAL PARTIES. FROM RIGHT OF CENTER TO LEFT OF CENTER, TO FORM ELECTORAL COLATIONS OR OTHERWISE PREPARE THEMSELVES TO PLAY THE NEW GAME, ARE ALSO IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS AS THE COUNTRY MOVES TOWARD THE HOLDING OF THE FIRST DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS (PROBABLY IN LATE MAY OR EARLY JUNE) IN OVER FORTY YEARS. THE SUAREZ GOVERNMENT, WITH THE KINGS FULL BACKING, HAS DEALT WITH A VARIETY OF PROBLEMS INCLUDING THE COMMUNISTS ONE WITH SKILL, COURAGE AND INNOVATION.

3. THROUGH THE PAST MONTHS, IT HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY CLEAR THAT THE MAJORITY OF THE SPANISH PEOPLE SUPPORT THE NOTION THAT SPAIN MUST CREATE A NEW FORM OF POLITICAL SOCIETY IN WHICH THEY MUST PLAY A FULL AND EQUAL ROLE. THEY RECOGNIZE THAT FRANCOISM WITH OUT FRANCO NOT ONLY HAD NO MEANING BUT IS ALIEN AND IRRELEVANT TO THE EUROPE IN WHICH SPAIN MUST LIVE TODAY.

4. HAVING SAID THIS, OF COURSE, IT MUST BE RECALLED THAT THERE ARE MINORITY GROUPS ON THE EXTREME RIGHT AND ON THE EXTREME LEFT WHICH, FOR THEIR OWN ENDS. WISH ONLY TOTAL FAILURE FOR THE PROCESS. THE EXTREME RIGHT WOULD LIKE NOTHING BETTER THAN TO PROVOKE SUFFICIENT COLLAPSE OF PUBLIC ORDER TO ENTICE THE MILITARY TO ASSUME POWER TO "SAVE THE STATE. SO FAR, THE MILITARY IN THEIR VAST MAJORITY REMAIN LOYAL TO THE KING AND TO CIVILIAN AUTHORITY AND HAVE GONE ALONG (WITH ADMITTEDLY VARYING BUT DISCIPLINES, DEGREES OF ENTHUSIAM) WITH THE DEMOCRATIC REFORM
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PROCESS. IT IS MY VIEW THAT THE LAST THING RESPONSIBLE LEADERS OF THE ARMY (A ON THE OTHER TWO SERVICES AS WELL) WANT IS TO STEP BACKWARDS INTO HISTORY AND CREATE ANOTHER MILITARY REGIME. IT IS ALSO NOT SURPRISING THAT EXTREME LEFTIST ELEMENTS ALSO WOULD LIKE TO POLARIZE THE SITUATION IN THE HOPE THAT IN RESULTING CHAOS SPAIN WOULD BE OPEN TO ULTIMATE COMMUNIST TAKE OVER. THERE IS NO EVIDENCE AT THIS TIME THAT THE PCE ITSELF IS MASTERMINDING THE PRESENT INCIDENTS BUT INEVITABLY IT IS DRAWN INTO THE RESULTANT ESCALATION. THE TWO EXTREMES COMPLEMENT EACH OTHER AS THEY SEEK TO KEEP THE SPECTRE OF THE CIVIL WAR FROM FINALLY BEING BURIED.

5. I DO NOT WANT TO MINIMIZE THE DIFFICULTIES AND DISORDERS WHICH LIE AHEAD. AT THE SAME TIME, I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THE RESOLVE OF THE KING AND THE GOVERNMENT PLUS THE SUPPORT OF THE MAJORITY OF THE SPANISH TO PURSUE EVOLUTAIION TOWARD DEMOCRACY WILL

EASILY BE FRUSTRATED. SPAIN HAS MOVED AN ENORMOUS DISTANCE POLITICALLY, ECONOMICALLY AND SOCIOLOGICALLY. IN THE PAST TWENTY YEARS. AND I AM CONVINCED THAT OVER THE MONTHS AHEAD SPAIN WILL SUCCESSFULLY OVERCOME THE ROADBLOCKS WHICH WILL BE ERECTED. NOW BY EXTREME, NOW BY THE OTHER, AND WILL PROCEED WITH ITS BLUE PRINT OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF ITS DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM. NONE OF THIS IS EASY, BUT THEN NOBODY REALLY THOUGHT IT WOULD BE.

6. INSOFAR AS THE UNITED STATES IS CONCERNED, I BELIEVE WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO MAKE CLEAR IN EVERY WAY WE CAN CONTINUING SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRATIC EVOLUTION IN THIS COUNTRY. THERE ARE THOSE, OF COURSE WHO FOR THEIR ENDS, ARGUE THAT WE WOULD LIKE TO KEEP SPAIN "DESTABILIZED" ON ORDER TO BRING BACK AN AUTHORITARIAN REGIME MORE INCLINED TO

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PROTECT OUR MILITARY FACILITIES. BUT I THINK THE GENERAL PERCEPTION IS THAT THE UNITED STATES IS SUPPORTIVE OF SPAIN IN ITS SELF TRANSFORMATION. I BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT AN EARLY STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT REAFFIRMAING US SUPPORT FOR THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS HERE WOULD HAVE A MOST POSITIVE AND ENCOURAGING EFFECT ON THAT MAJORITY IN SPAIN WHO ARE COMMITTED TO A PEACFUL AND GENERAL EVOLUTION TOWARD SPANISH DEMOCRACY. STABLER

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